

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 5, 6, 9, 10, and 14 are now present in this application. Claims 5 and 14 are independent.

Claims 1-4, 7, 8, and 11-13 have been canceled and claims 5, 6, 9, and 14 have been amended. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 8-10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the early indication of allowable subject matter in this application. As set forth above, the limitations of objected-to claim 8 have been added into independent claim 5, and therefore independent claim 5 should be in condition for allowance. Also, claims 6, 9, 10 depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 5, and are therefore allowable based on their dependence from claim 5 which is believed to be allowable.

Independent claim 14 has also been amended in a manner similar to claim 5, to include subject matter from objected-to claim 8. Applicants submit that claim 14 should be in condition for allowance.

Consideration and allowance of claims 5, 6, 9, 10, and 14 are respectfully requested.

Reasons for Entry of Amendments

At the outset, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered into the Official File in view of the fact that the amendments to the claims place the application in condition for allowance.

In particular, this Amendment incorporates subject matter of allowable claim 8 into independent claims 5 and 14. This Amendment was not presented at an earlier date in view of the fact that Applicants did not fully appreciate the Examiner's position until the Final Office Action was reviewed.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging Applicants' claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119, and receipt of the certified priority document.

Information Disclosure Citation

The Information Disclosure Statement filed by Applicants has been considered by the Examiner, and an initialed PTO-SB08 form has been provided by the Examiner. Therefore, no outstanding issues remain with respect to the consideration of Information Disclosure Statements.

Drawings

Since no objection has been received, Applicants assume that the drawings are acceptable and that no further action is necessary. Confirmation thereof in the next Office Action is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 11, 13, and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,554,275 (Tranquilla). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A complete discussion of the Examiner's rejection is set forth in the Office Action, and is not being repeated here.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 11, and 13 have been cancelled, thus rendering this rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) moot with regard to those claims. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

With regard to the rejection of claim 14, while not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 14 has been amended to include the limitations of objected-to allowable claim 8, thereby placing independent claim 14 into condition for allowance.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 2-7 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tranquilla in view of U.S. Application Publication 2003/0090050 (Sueoka), and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,731,393 (Currans). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A complete discussion of the Examiner's rejection is set forth in the Office Action, and is not being repeated here.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-4, 7, and 12 have been cancelled, thus rendering this rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 moot with regard to those claims. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

With regard to the rejection of claim 5, while not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 5 has been amended to include the limitations of objected-to allowable claim 8, thereby placing independent claim 5 into condition for allowance, along with dependent claims 6, 9, and 10.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

In view of the above amendment, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact **Robert W. Downs**, Registration No. 48,222 at the telephone number of the undersigned below to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Director is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge any fees required during the pendency of the above-identified application or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448.

Dated: July 13, 2010

Respectfully submitted,

By Robert Down # 48222
Michael R. Cammarata *Robert Down*
Registration No.: 39491
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Road, Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
703-205-8000